LET US THINK

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Brothers in Islam! Muslims are the only people in the world today fortunate enough to possess the word of God preserved in its original form, free from all distortions, and precisely in the wording in which it was sent down upon the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him. Paradoxically, these same Muslims suffer the misfortune of being denied the countless blessings and benefits which the word of God must give to those who believe in it. The Qur'an was sent to them for them to read it, understand it, act upon it, and, with its help, establish on God's earth the rule of His law. The Qur'an came

to grant them dignity and power. It came to make them true vicegerents of God on earth. And history shows that whenever they acted according to its guidance, it did make them the leaders of the world.

Irreverence and Misuse

But nor the Qur'an's usefulness, for many Muslims, consists only in keeping it in their houses to drive away jinns and ghosts, in writing its verses on amulets to hang round their necks or washing those amulets with water and then drinking it, or in reading its contents without comprehending their meaning in the hope of receiving some reward. No longer do they seek guidance from it for their lives. No longer do they ask it to tell them what should be their beliefs, morals and actions, nor how they should conduct transactions, what principles they should observe while dealing with enemies

and friends, what the rights are of their fellow beings and of their own selves. Nor do they turn to it to find what is true and what is false, whom they should obey and whom disobey, who their friends are and who their enemies, where honour, well-being and benefit are to be found and where disgrace, failure and loss.

We Muslims have given up looking for answers to these important questions in the Qur'an. Instead, we now ask Kafirs, idolators, misguided, selfish people, even our own ego and desires -- and follow what they advise. What invariable happens to those who ignore Allah and follow the precepts of other has happened to us too. We are reaping only what we have sown everywhere in the world-- in Palestine, the Middle East, Pakistan, Indonesia and many other places.

The Qur'an is the source of every good: it will give whatever and as much as you ask from

it. If you seek from it such trivial, frivolous and spurious things as how to scare away jinns and ghosts, how to cure coughs and fevers, how to succeed in litigation and find a job-- then you may get them, but only them. If you seek supremacy on earth and the power to rule the world you may get that too. And if you wish to reach near God's Throne ('Arsh), the Qur'an will take you there. If you receive only a few drops from the ocean, do not blame the Qur'an, blame yourselves. For the whole ocean is there waiting for him who knows how to take it.

Incomprehensible Contradictions

The cruel jokes, brothers, which we Muslims play with the Holy Book of Allah are so inane that if we saw someone else doing such things in any other sphere of life, we would mock them and even brand them as lunatics.

Tell me, what would you say if some body got a doctor's prescription and hung it round his neck after wrapping it in a piece of cloth or washed it in water and drank it? Would you not laugh at him and call him a fool? Yet this is the very treatment being given before your eyes to the matchless prescription written by the greatest of all doctors to provide a cure for all your ailments-- and nobody laughs! No one even reflects that a prescription is not meant to be hung round the neck nor are its words to be washed in water and drunk

Tell me, what would you think if someone who was ill picked up a book on medicine and began to read it, believing, thinking that this would cure him? Would you not say that he was deranged? Yet this is how we treat the Book which the supreme Healer has sent for the cure of our diseases. We think that just by flicking through all its pages, our diseases will disappear

without our following the directions given in them or abstaining from the things which they pronounced harmful. Are we not in the same situation as the man who considers that reading a book on medicine will cure his illness?

If you receive a business letter in a language you do not know, you go to a man who knows the language to find out what it says. You remain anxious and restless until you have found out what the letter says; even though it will bring only some paltry worldly profit But the letter sent to you by the Lord of the worlds which can bring you all the benefits of this-world and the Eternal Life is carelessly set aside. You do not show any uneasiness at not understanding its contents. Is this not astonishing?

I am not trying to make you laugh. Reflect for a while on these facts and your hearts will tell you that the greatest possible injustice is

being done to the Book of Allah. Ironically, the culprits are the very people who proclaim their faith in it and proclaim their readiness to sacrifice their lives for it. No doubt they do have faith in it and love it more than their lives, but the pity is that it is they, more than anyone else, who treat it outrageously. And the consequences of such treatment are quite plain to see.

The Consequences

Understand fully that Allah's word does not come to bring misery, disgrace and suffering to man. 'We have not sent down the Qur'an upon you that you be wretched' (Ta Ha 20: 1--2). On the contrary, the Qur'an is the source of happiness and success. It is impossible for a people to possess God's word and yet suffer disgrace and ignominy, live under subjugation, be trampled on and kicked around, and carry the

yoke of slavery on their necks, being led by the nose like animals. A people meet this fate only when they do injustice to the word of God.

Look at the fate of the Israelites. They were given the Tawrah and the Injil, and were told:

Had they established the Torah and the Gospel and what was sent down to them by their Lord, they would surely have partaken of all the blessings from above them [heaven] and beneath their feet [earth] (al- Ma'idah 5: 66).

But they adopted a wrong attitude towards these Books of Allah, and reaped the consequences:

An ignominy and helplessness were laid upon them, and they were laden with the burden of God's anger. That, because they used to disbelieve God's messages and slay the Prophets against all right; that, because they disobeyed and were transgressors (al-Baqarah 2: 61).

If people possess Allah's Book and still live

in disgrace and subjugation, they are surely being punished for doing injustice to Allah's word. The only way to save yourselves from Allah's anger is to turn back from this grave sin and start trying to render His Book its due. Until you do, your condition will never change-- if you open colleges in each and every village, all your children graduate from universities, and you amass millions through unscrupulous means.

No Islam without Submitting to the Qur'an

Brothers! Two most important things every Muslim must know to do justice to the Book of God: who is truly a Muslim and what word 'Muslim' means.

Human beings who do not know what humanity is and what the difference is between man and animal will inevitable indulge in behaviour unworthy of the human race and

attach no value to being human. Similarly, people who do not know the true meaning of being Muslims and how a Muslim is different from a non-Muslim will behave like non-Muslims and will not be worthy of being Muslims.

Every Muslim, adult or child, should therefore know what it means to be a Muslim, what difference being a Muslim must make to his life, what responsibilities devolve on him, and what limits are set by Islam within which a man remains a Muslim and by transgressing which he ceases to be a Muslim.

Islam means submission and obedience to God. To entrust yourselves completely to God is Islam. To relinquish all claims to absolute freedom and independence and to follow God's will in Islam. To surrender yourselves before the sovereignty of God is Islam. If you bring all the affairs of your lives under God you are

Muslims and if you keep any of the affairs in your own hands or entrust them to someone other than God you are not Muslims.

To bring your affairs under God means to accept unreservedly the guidance sent by God through His Book and His Messengers. It, therefore, becomes necessary to follow only the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah. Muslims follow no authority other than that of God, whether it be their reason or customs. In every matter they seek guidance from God's Book and His Messenger to find what they should do and what they should not do. They accept without hesitation whatever guidance they get from there and reject whatever they find opposed to it.

Such total surrender to God is what makes one a Muslim. By contrast, people are certainly not Muslims who, instead of following the Qur'an and the Sunnah, obey the dictates of their own reason and desires, follow the

practices of their forefathers, accept what is happening in society, and never bother to ascertain from the Qur'an and Sunnah how to run their affairs, or refuse to accept the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah by saying: 'They do not appeal to my reason', or They are against the ways of my forefathers' or 'The world is moving in an opposite direction'. Such people are liars if they call themselves Muslims.

The moment you recite the Kalimah: 'La ilaha illa 'llah Muhammadu 'r-rasulu 'llah, you accept that the only law you recognize is the law of God, only God is your sovereign, only God is your ruler, only God you will obey, and only the things given in God's Book and by His Messengers are true and right. It means that as soon as you become Muslims you must renounce your authority in favour of God's authority.

Consequently, you have no right to say, 'My

opinion is this, the prevalent custom is this, the family tradition is this, that scholar and that holy person say this'. In the face of Allah's word and His Messenger's Sunnah, you cannot argue in this manner. You should judge everything in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah; accept what is in conformity with them and reject what runs counter to them, irrespective of the people who may be behind them. It is a contradiction in terms to call yourselves Muslims on the one hand, and, on the other, follow your own opinions or the customs of society or some person's words or actions as against the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Just as a blind person cannot claim to have eyes, nor a deaf person to have ears, so a person who refuses to sub- ordinate the affairs of his life to the dictates of the Qur'an and the sunnah cannot call himself a Muslim.

No one who does not want to be a Muslim

can be compelled to be one against his will. You are free to adopt any religion you like and call yourselves by any names you like. But, once having called yourselves Muslims, you must fully understand that you can remain Muslims only as long as you stay within the bounds of Islam. These bounds are: to accept the word of God and His Messenger's Sunnah as the ultimate criteria of truth and justice and to consider everything opposed to them as wrong. If you remain within these bounds you are Muslims, but if you overstep them you cease to be part of Islam. To continue, in such circumstances, to consider yourselves and call yourselves Muslims is tantamount to both self-deception and deception of others. 'Whoso judges not according to what God has sent down, they are the unbelievers'

(al-Ma'idah 5: 44).